(b) whether the Ernst and Young report has also identified India as a notable area for bio-tech expanssion; and

(c) if so, what steps Government are taking to develop the industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT): (a) to (c) Sir, India has emerged as an important bio-tech centre and has the potential to become a leading player in the bio-tech sector in the Asia Pacific Region. The Frnst and Young report has concentrated mainly on the bio-tech industry of the United States, Europe, Canada and ten Asia pacific Nations including India having good potential for the expansion of the bio-tech industry.

To encourage industrial sector, the Government of India has established Technology Development Board (TDB) and pharmaceutical Research and Development Support Fund (PRDSF) under the Department of Science & Technology for providing soft loans, incentives like exemption from Drugs (Price Control) Order, 1995 for certain bio-tech products. More than 100% of weighted deductions on R&D expenditure etc., have been allowed. There is an expert task force under the Department of Bio-technology to support bio-tech idustry related projects, Fifty three technologies have been transferred to industries Bio-technology product, Process Development and Commerialization Awards are presented to scientists, groups and industry every year on National Technology Day, 11th May, as an incentive. Human Resource Development Programmes in bio-technology have been implemented at universities and IITs. Further, the steps taken by the Government for promotion of bio-tec sector include imposing Customs Duties on imported bio-tech product wherever necessary, encouraging Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in bio-tech sector, initiating measures for speedy implementation of Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) projects, constitution of Fast Track Committee (FTC) under Foreign Investment Implementation Authroity (FIIA) etc.

Quality of steel in BSP

432. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that lesser quantity of good quality steel and

large quantity of scrap is being produced due to spurious ferrous manganese/ferrous silicon in the Bhilai Steel Plant;

(b) whether, as a result thereof the quality of railway tracks has deteriorated and Government have suffered huge losses;

(c) if so, for how many years adulteration has been going on and the action taken against the active transporters and the involved guilty persons;

(d) whether such process is going on in other plants of SAIL also; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) There is no evidence that supply of adulterated silico-manganese in BSP is continuing for many years. Silico-manganese is supplied to BSP by Maharashtra Elekrosmelt Ltd. (MEL), Chandrapur, a subsidiary of SAIL. The material is dispatched from MEL to BSP through private transporters appointed by MEL.

As and when any complaint or information is received regarding any adulteration, the concerned authorities in SAIL Plants take action and also report the matter to the local police, who carry out their independent investigation against the accused.

Losses of SAIL

433. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA:
DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA:
SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the losses of Steel Authority of India Limited have increased during the year ending 31st March, 2002;

(b) if so, the figure of losses during this year and during the year 2000-2001 separately;